Background

Residential Year 2017/18 is a transitional year as the University revises and reorients its undergraduate housing policies toward a new Hall Allocation Policy to be implemented in 2018/19. The transitional policy, to this end, is intended to aid in the achievement of the following long-term goal:

The University will increase the number of Yr-1 students with a full-year residential life experience beginning in 2017/18 as a step forward to the longer-term goal of providing a full-year of housing to a greater number of Yr-1 students. In 2017-18, a pilot run of the First-Year Experience (FYE) program will be launched, and 600 Yr-1 students with a full-year of housing will join the program (we expect to double this number in 2018-19).

The increase in the number of Yr-1 students with a full-year residential life experience has meant that a higher percentage of housing spaces will be reserved for new students. This greater use of the limited housing resource has been justified on the grounds that the First-Year Experience program provides new students with a foundational experience with which to transform the approach to their entire undergraduate life at the University. The goals of the program are to help new students adapt to the University environment; develop a sense of belonging to a community by living in proximity to a peer group led by senior students and residential staff; benefit fully from the rich diversity of the HKUST student body by joining an environment committed to respectful interaction; and encourage Yr-1 students to take full advantage of the many academic, co-curricular, and social resources available on campus. Each residence hall has a unique set of activities and programs supervised by the Residence Master. The Residence Master appoints and leads a team of student “Senior Undergraduate Mentors” (SUGs), each of whom provides support and mentorship to a diverse group of Yr-1 students with the goal of cultivating respectful and lively interaction.
Basic Principles of the Hall Allocation Policy for Residential Year 2017/18

1. Yr-1 local students are provided with at least one semester of University housing in one of the nine Residence Halls on the Clear Water Bay campus: Yr-1 local students who are admitted to the FYE Pilot Program, as described above, will receive two semesters of University Housing; Yr-1 local students with a home base greater than 100 minutes away from campus may be offered two semesters of University housing, based upon availability and demand, as determined by the Student Housing and Residential Life Office (SHRLO).

2. The University provides all non-local students with University housing during their first two years of study at HKUST in order to support them in adapting to the life in Hong Kong. (Yr-1 non-local students are encouraged to join the FYE Pilot Program.) Yr-2 non-local students may be assigned University housing in Residence Halls I-IX on the Clear Water Bay campus or in the Hong Kong Jockey Club Hall in Tseung Kwan O.

3. The University invites all other undergraduates to apply for available University housing (Residence Halls I-IX in Clear Water Bay and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Hall in Tseung Kwan O). Applicants must submit information about the location of their home base as well as participation in campus activities and may receive a housing offer based upon the outcome of the Composite Score system or the weighted lottery. The goal here is to offer a wide variety of students with diverse interests and backgrounds the opportunity to catalyze their engagement in academic, co-curricular, and social pursuits by allowing all HKUST undergraduates to apply for available housing.

4. The University considers the commute hardship of students as a factor in its housing allocation policies. Yr-2 to Yr-4 local students with a Hong Kong home base greater than two hours by public transportation from campus were provided with two semesters of University housing in 2017/18. Students with a home base less than two hours from campus may receive additional consideration in the scheme (see p. 5 for details).

5. Some non-local students who had already lived in University housing on campus for two years or more, even if they have no home base in Hong Kong, will not receive an offer of University housing in 2017/18. The revised Composite Score system implemented in 2017/18 does not automatically guarantee a full four years of University housing to all non-local undergraduates.
Students, not already provided with University housing, were invited to apply to SHRLO for a Hall place according to a series of considerations and Offer Streams (please refer to pp. 4-5 for detailed information) developed after long consultation with student representatives, faculty, and the senior administration, to ensure that the limited housing resource was distributed in a principled manner. The goal was to encourage a residential community comprised of students representing a diversity of backgrounds, experiences, and interests. Additional consideration was given to students with long commute times.

Although it has been the longstanding policy of the University to guarantee housing to non-local undergraduates in their first two years of study, previous iterations of the Composite Score system had been designed to ensure a favorable outcome to all non-local students, irrespective of their year of study. A revision of this system was deemed necessary because the University had never promised any undergraduate a full four years of housing; however, many non-local students had come to believe in a four-year housing entitlement, and there may also have been confusion among those who have interacted with prospective students on University housing matters. The transitional change to the Composite Score system in 2017/18, and the subsequent abolition of the Composite Score system in 2018/19, will bring clarity to the University’s longstanding policy: Non-local students are guaranteed University housing in their first two years of study.

Of the approximately 770 Yr-3 and Yr-4 non-local students who applied for University housing for 2017-18, 130 did not receive a University housing offer and have been placed on the waiting list. All have been provided with information about renting in the local private housing market or arranging a room in the nearby dormitories at the Hong Kong Adventist College (HKAC is 15-20 minutes by bus on Clear Water Bay Road). In the future, all non-local students should expect to seek other housing options during their third and fourth years of study, as the number of spaces offered by the University to non-local juniors and seniors will be limited, and the housing allocation system will continue to undergo revision in the coming years. For more on off-campus options: [http://shrl.ust.hk/eng/detail.php?catid=2&sid=16&tid=9](http://shrl.ust.hk/eng/detail.php?catid=2&sid=16&tid=9)


The University’s housing policy in 2017/18 remains unchanged for exchange-in students. Approximately 500 bed spaces are allocated for their use. This policy will be reviewed, and possible changes may be implemented in 2018/19.
Details of the Four Offer Streams for Determining Undergraduate Residential Housing Offers in 2017/18 (applicable to UG Yr-2 and above):

1. **Priority Housing**

   - **Eligibility:** Yr-2 non-local applicants and Yr-2 local applicants without a home base in Hong Kong
   - **Mechanism:** Student housing is offered to eligible students who had submitted the housing application and completed all required procedures by the stipulated deadlines.
   - **Rationale:** The University guarantees housing to all Yr-1 and Yr-2 students without a home base in Hong Kong in order to enhance their adaptation to the Hong Kong environment.

2. **Composite Score**

   - **Eligibility:** All hall applicants (except those already receiving an offer under Priority Housing)
   - **Mechanism:** The Composite Score system adopted in the hall admission exercise for Residential Year 2016/17 was applied to this Offer Stream for the admission exercise for Residential Year 2017/18. The Composite Score system is comprised of three components: Home Distance, Contribution to Campus Life, and Outstanding Performance -- with weighting of scores of 50, 35 and 15 respectively. Students with the highest composite scores were offered hall residence under this Offer Stream.
   - **Rationale:** Student feedback, provided in forums and surveys conducted from November 2016 to February 2017, was considered carefully and contributed to the final outcome: During the transitional year to the new hall policy to be adopted in 2018/19, the management maintained the Composite Score system in 2017/18 until a consensus is reached about its replacement.

(NB: The Composite Score system will be abolished in 2018/19; a simplified replacement scheme will be announced by the end of 2017).
3. **Commute Hardship**

- **Eligibility:** Local applicants with traveling time (TT) over 120 minutes (not already receiving a Hall offer from the above two Offer Streams)
- **Mechanism:** Student housing is offered to all students with TT over 120 minutes. TT is determined according to Hong Kong e-transport as stipulated under the Composite Score system in this policy; student housing was offered if eligible students submitted the housing application and completed all required procedures by the stipulated deadlines.
- **Rationale:** To alleviate the commute hardship of students with a home base greater than two hours from the University campus.

4. **Home Distance (Lottery)**

- **Eligibility:** All hall applicants not receiving hall offers from the abovementioned streams
- **Mechanism:** A weighted lot drawing for housing offers is applied. Different weightings are allocated to students according to their student type and traveling time (TT) as determined under the Composite Score system in this policy.

The weightings for different group of students are listed below:

- Local students with TT equal to or below 90 minutes: 1
- Local students with TT above 90 minutes: 2
- Non-local students: 12

- For each weighting, a student is assigned one random number (e.g., non-local students are assigned 12 random numbers as their weighting is 12). The lot drawing is conducted by selecting the students with the lowest random number among the many numbers randomly assigned to all applicants, and then eliminating duplications.

- **Rationale:** To improve the diversity of hall residents by opening hall spaces to all students, especially those not successful according to the criteria of the Composite Score system.
5. **Waiting List**

Students not receiving Hall offers in the above four Offer Streams are placed on a waiting list posted on the SHRLO website. Students are contacted as soon as housing spaces become available, according to their position on the waiting list. For more information on the waiting list please consult:


*The number of students offered housing under each Offer Stream is detailed in Appendix III.

**Assistance Plan Offered by the Student Housing and Residential Life Office**

To aid students who are not offered University housing in the abovementioned Offer Streams, SHRLO offers assistance and advice about renting units in the private housing markets and information about social networks of HKUST student renters who may be looking for a roommate. In addition, SHRLO provides information for and contact assistance with the following:

1. **Residence in the Hong Kong Adventist College (HKAC) on Clear Water Bay Road (15-20 minutes via public bus #91)**

SHRLO has reserved 100 bed spaces at HKAC for HKUST student use during Residential Year 2017/18. Non-local students may reside in HKAC for the full academic year or temporarily while they search for other housing options. The 100 bed spaces at HKAC will be reserved only for non-local students until 15 Sept 2017. Thereafter, application for housing at HKAC is opened to all HKUST UG students who have not received a hall offer. Requests must be made through SHRLO at HKUST:

offcamhouse@ust.hk

2. **Work-study Program**

Work-study Programs will be designed by SHRLO in collaboration with HKUST students. Interested students will be invited to apply to work on projects coordinated by SHRLO and other units on campus. Students may also propose their own ideas.
for projects, which if deemed beneficial to the Office or the University, will be approved by SHRLO. Students will receive monetary incentives intended to provide financial assistance toward their off-campus accommodation costs. Please contact SHRLO for further details:

shrloinfo@ust.hk

Appendix I

Number of hall places available for continuing students after deductions for priority and guaranteed housing:

A. Number of Hall places available in UG Halls I – IX and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Hall:

Deduct: Number of Hall places reserved for new non-local students: (440)

Deduct: Number of Hall places reserved for exchange-in students: (490)

Deduct: Number of Hall places for new local students with 1-year hall offer: (800)^

Deduct: Number of Hall places for new local students with 1-term hall offer: (500)

Total Number of Hall places available for continuing UG students 2,314

^2000 new local students are expected to be admitted to HKUST. 40% of the annual intake of new local students (800/2000=40%), those participating in the FYE Pilot Program, will be offered one year of hall residence; other new local students will be offered one term of hall residence, in either the Fall or Spring Term, except those new local students living at a distance greater than 100 minutes from campus, who may be offered two semesters of housing and/or included in the FYE Pilot Program.
Appendix II

Quota distribution of housing spaces available for continuing UGs (after deducting priority and guaranteed housing offers):

Distribution of quotas for continuing UGs:

(a) Quota reserved for Residence Master (e.g., SUG Mentors): 135
(b) Quota reserved for Priority Housing: 483*
(c) Quota reserved for Composite Score system: 1,294
(d) Quota reserved for Commute Hardship: 194
(e) Quota reserved for Home Distance (Lot Drawing): 288

Total Number of quota reserved for continuing UG students: 2,394#

* Among the offers made, 357 are to Yr-2 non-local students and 126 to Yr-2 local students without a home base in Hong Kong.

# The number of hall offers to continuing UG students is slightly higher (by 80) than that of the actual number of hall places available. From past experience, a corresponding number of students will withdraw or not accept their hall offer.

Appendix III

Number of continuing students offered University housing in each Offer Stream:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offer Stream</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>(Quotas reserved)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priority Housing</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>(483)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composite Score</td>
<td>1,295</td>
<td>(1,294)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commute Hardship</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>(194)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Distance (Lot Drawing)</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>(288)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with Special Needs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(−)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence Masters' Discretion</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>(135)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,268@</td>
<td>(2,394)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

@ The distribution of the 2,268 students by halls and by year of study is presented in Appendix IV.
Appendix IV

Distribution of the 2,268 continuing students (without priority or guaranteed housing) according to initial Housing offers (by UG Hall and student year of study):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hall</th>
<th>Year of Study in 2017/18</th>
<th>Total Number of continuing students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jockey Club Hall</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG Hall I</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG Hall II</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG Hall III</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG Hall IV</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG Hall V</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG Hall VI</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG Hall VII</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG Hall VIII</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG Hall IX</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>813</td>
<td>762</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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