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Re: Shortage of university residences

Good day,

Your article titled "Shortage of university residences" (07 February 2018) refers.

The headline and the introductory paragraph – which states that there is a "huge shortage of accommodation for the thousands of university students streaming to campuses across the country" is not applicable to UCT this year.

UCT had, as of Thursday morning (08 February) been able to place all first-time entering students with housing offers in our residences. The university is currently aware of only 55 returning students who were yet to be placed in residences, and the Student Housing department is working as speedily as possible to place these students.

While there is always limited capacity for on-campus accommodation, this is nothing new, but it has not been a crisis at UCT this year.

Those students who cannot secure on-campus accommodation are assisted through the university's Off Campus Student Accommodation Services (OCSAS).

The article quotes a member of the SRC as saying "the problem is the institution over offers residential space which resulted in confusion and frustration." UCT was not afforded the right to respond, which would have given the reader the correct view of the situation.

The over-allocation factor is always applied to ensure that the university is ultimately able to fill all the available beds. Long-term annual analysis shows a no-show an average of 10-15% of the offers made as a result of, among others, students who had been made offers but opt to study at other universities or do not ultimately become eligible for admission after the final matric results. The fact that all students with offers will be placed in UCT residences – and in fact only 55 were yet to be placed while there are still a few

hundred places available in our residences – clearly indicates that over-offering is not “the problem”.

Additionally, the article modifies a direct quote, thereby introducing factual and grammatical errors.

The article states:

UCT spokesperson Elijah Moholola said: “University had 79% of students who have been made accommodation offers placed in university residences.

However, this was the quote provided:

The University of Cape Town has, as of 5 February 2018, had 79% of students who have been made accommodation offers placed in university residences.

The issue with not providing the date on which the update was provided is that the accommodation situation changes constantly. In fact, at the time the article was published on Wednesday, 86% of students had been placed while the figure is currently 89% on Thursday.

Kindly address the above concerns by correcting the online version of this story please and printing this response.

Regards,

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