

Approved at the meeting of the Council I2/2012

Updated at the meeting of the Council II/2016 & 9/2018

I Housing policy paper

2 I Introduction

This policy paper sets top-level ideological principles for the housing operations of Aalto University Student Union and defines the housing policy aims of AYY. The policy paper describes the vision for the future of student housing and the objective which AYY aims to achieve by renting flats. The housing policy paper includes the policies of AYY on housing production subsidisation, such as investment aid to special groups. Policies relating to housing demand benefit (for example, general housing benefit), are defined in the subsistence policy paper.

In addition to the housing policy paper, AYY's housing and property operations are regulated by:

- * The finance and asset management policy
- * The property policy
- * The property strategy
- * The housing guidelines
- * The housing management guidelines
- * The environmental policy

AYY's property policy describes permanent principles relating to the maintenance, care, finance and alterations of the property assets. The housing guidelines, on the other hand, set directives on tenant selection and the housing management guidelines rule on tenant actions. In addition, the Board can draw up permanent decisions and guidelines that facilitate execution through its own decision.

Changes to this policy paper will be made by the Council.

26 2 The principles and objectives of the housing operations of AYY

AYY's housing operations are a core member service, the objective of which is to make the subsistence of students easier and support the ability to study by offering reasonably-priced accommodation and services related to accommodation to those that need them. Living in the flats of AYY is comfortable, affordable and community-based. As many of the membership of AYY as possible want to live primarily in a student flat owned by AYY and

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33 AYY seeks to provide accommodation to as many of them as possible. Living
34 in an AYY flat is the first choice of tenants.

35 2.1 The principles of housing operations

36 *Equality.* AYY treats all its members equally and the housing operations of
37 AYY are transparent.

38 *Need-orientedness.* The objective of the housing operations of AYY is to
39 meet the need of the membership and primarily help students who have the
40 greatest need. In its housing operations, AYY prioritises the students whose
41 accommodation situation is the weakest and the need for reasonably-priced
42 student accommodation the greatest.

43 *Member-orientedness and flexibility.* In the housing operations of AYY, the
44 varied life situations of students are identified and it is sought to be flexible
45 with regard to these.

46 *The educational role.* For many AYY tenants, moving into an AYY flat is a
47 move to their first home of their own. With its housing operations, AYY
48 supports its membership in starting independent life and promotes the
49 responsible and sustainable living habits of its membership that take
50 neighbours and the environment into account.

51 2.2 The principles of tenant selection

52 In its tenant selection, AYY follows laws and decrees regarding subsidised
53 housing and the guidelines of the Ministry of the Environment and ARA (The
54 Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland).

55 The flats of AYY are meant for all members of the Student Union who meet
56 the conditions of the flats subsidised by ARA. However, there is a limited
57 number of flats in comparison with the number of members. Tenants are
58 chosen from the applicants on the basis of social fitness for purpose and
59 financial need, which are assessed on the basis of the applicant's need for
60 accommodation, income and wealth. The applicants who have urgent need
61 of accommodation or a particular need of a reasonably-priced flat, such as
62 students with families and first-year students, take precedence.

63 AYY treats international and domestic degree students in the same way in
64 tenant selection, but AYY does take the difficult accommodation situation of
65 international degree students into account in its services and seeks, as
66 possibilities allow, to improve the situation with various kinds of additional
67 services. AYY does not accept solutions in which international degree

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68 students are put in an unequal position depending on whether or not they
69 pay tuition fees.

70 Exchange students and the comparable international students that come to
71 Finland temporarily are in a particularly difficult position in the
72 accommodation market due to their short stay and for that reason it is
73 justified to prioritise them in tenant selection. In the view of AYY, Aalto
74 University should support internationalisation by agreeing on housing quotas
75 for exchange students and paying compensation for under-usage caused by
76 the flats set aside for exchange students. In principle, the exchange students
77 studying in different colleges should be in an equal position, but AYY may
78 also agree on quotas for exchange students with an individual college if an
79 exchange student accommodation quota common to the whole university is
80 not possible.

81 As possibilities allow, AYY seeks to promote communality of living and
82 communication between cultures through the tenant selection when striving
83 for this is not significantly in conflict with tenant selection based on social
84 and financial need.

85 AYY can prioritise certain types of accommodation for particular student
86 groups when it is justified, taking efficient use of the housing stock, the
87 appropriacy of the flats and the living comfort of the tenants into account.
88 AYY prioritises students in its tenant selection in accordance with
89 accommodation types as follows:

- 90 • A shared flat: new student, exchange student
- 91 • A 1, 2,3, or 4-bedroom flat: a student with a child or children
- 92 • A furnished flat: exchange students
- 93 • A disabled access flat or one that can be made into such with
94 reasonable alterations: a person who has a need for a disabled access
95 flat on the basis of a doctor's certificate

96 There are more detailed regulations regarding tenant selection and the
97 terms of the tenancy in the housing guidelines and the scoring guidelines for
98 housing applications. Section

99 **2.3 The principles and objectives of the housing stock**

100 AYY's housing stock is diverse in terms of its types of flats, locations and price
101 range, so that every potential tenant has the possibility to find a flat that
102 matches their needs and wishes. The housing stock matches the demand and

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103 the accommodation wishes of prioritised student groups are emphasised in
104 the selection.

105 AYY's flats are in the immediate vicinity of the Otaniemi main campus or
106 within good transport connections from the main campus and the centre of
107 Helsinki. There is a reliable public transport connection from the properties
108 that takes a maximum of 40 minutes during daytime to the Otaniemi campus
109 and the centre of Helsinki. AYY primarily seeks to own several
110 accommodation sites in the same area.

111 The condition of properties is monitored systematically with a long-term view
112 to ensure their good condition. No significant variation in the condition of
113 the flats is shown when the wide age range of the flats is taken into account.

114 The objectives for changes to the property stock of AYY are outlined in the
115 property strategy.

116 **2.4 The principles and objectives of the services of housing**

117 The housing services of AYY are high-quality, accessible, open and flexible.
118 In the execution of the services, attention is paid to customer-orientedness,
119 which is achieved by making services electronic.

120 AYY's customer service is dependable and friendly. Most customer
121 transactions can be done electronically and the opening times of the
122 accommodation office take seasonal variations into account. The
123 accommodation search system of AYY is easy to use, transparent and
124 impartial.

125 The housing operations of AYY are open and AYY communicates about its
126 housing operations actively to both tenants and the membership. The
127 information of the properties, the selection grounds of tenants, rent
128 determination grounds and AYY's housing operations communications reach
129 both the tenants and other members. AYY offers its tenants tools that work
130 for mutual contact to realise tenant democracy and organise communal
131 tenant action.

132 Each property has a castle warden selected from amongst its residents.

133 **2.5 Communal living for Aalto people**

134 Community in living is village spirit, neighbourliness, understanding and
135 everyday deeds. The objective of AYY is to offer its tenants a warm and safe
136 community in which neighbours are not just names on doors.

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137 With tenant action, the communality of living and tenant democracy, it is
138 sought to strengthen tenant satisfaction and the feeling of ownership, and
139 through these ensure the longer operating life and better quality of the
140 properties. AYY believes that the communality of living contributes to the
141 Aalto spirit and communication between cultures, as well as supporting the
142 students' ability to study by reducing loneliness. AYY promotes responsible
143 living habits that are in accordance with sustainable development and take
144 neighbours into account. The housing operations of AYY support the
145 communality of all the users of the main campus.

146 AYY promotes and facilitates tenant action and communality in the
147 properties that it owns. AYY offers financial support and help to tenant
148 action in realising tenant-driven projects. The communality of living is
149 promoted through, for example, tenant selection, communal areas and
150 offering tools for mutual contact between tenants.

151 There is a working tenant democracy at all of AYY's accommodation sites,
152 which the tenants participate in actively. Tenants feel that there is a real
153 possibility to influence decision-making that concerns their own housing
154 through tenant democracy.