

Optimistic estimates for campus rooms takeup

The University is predicting an optimistic rise in students returning to campus accommodation, despite the number of empty rooms doubling over the past year. If the University's prediction is not accurate, then there could be a shortfall from the expected income generated from accommodation

By [Neil Johnston](#), News Editor (2012/13)

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The University had 177 void rooms this year, up from 88 in 2011/2012 Photo Credit: Philippa Grafton

The University is predicting an optimistic rise in students returning to campus accommodation, despite the number of empty rooms doubling over the past year.

According to figures obtained through a Freedom of Information Request, the University is expecting a 63 per cent rise in second and third year students choosing to return to campus accommodation.

Currently, 438 second and third year students live in campus accommodation, however the number is expected to increase to 714.

This is despite the fact there has been a rise in the number of empty rooms over the last two years. In 2012/13, there were 177 rooms void at the start of the year compared to 88 in 2011/2012 and only 37 in 2010/11.

If the University's prediction is not accurate, then there could be a shortfall from the expected income generated from accommodation.

Next year, the average rent paid by students for on-campus accommodation will be £4,949.04, an increase from £4,551.16 this year. This means that there is the potential for a £1,365,924 shortfall, if the figures predicted by the University are not accurate although the University will always need to keep a number of extra rooms for students that ask to move back on to campus for welfare issues.

A University spokesperson defended the figures saying, "The University's Council has approved the construction of a ninth residential college for the start of academic year 2014-15. This will allow us to increase the percentage of upper year and postgraduate students in college from the current 33 per cent

to 41 per cent.

“The total number of students living on campus will still be less than 6,000 out of a total student population of more than 15,000. We are confident that we can attract sufficient numbers of upper year and postgraduate students to fill the additional places.”

They added: “There are always some voids in university-owned accommodation, and we expected an increase in voids in 2012-13 with the opening of new Langwith.

“We are confident that the void rate can be reduced going forward through positive marketing of rooms to upper year and PG students.”

Kallum Taylor, YUSU President, commented, “It’s a big worry to see us fall short on places filled this year. It has all kinds of knock-on effects, from the University’s financial pot and future planning, to even derailing how JCRC’s might have budgeted for their Freshers’ Week programmes.”

He added, “There’s both external and internal reasons for the drop; and at least the University have smelled the coffee now and woken up to the fact that they’ve got to go out of their way in making their offer genuinely competitive.

“It’s also worth noting that we fully support their push to have more second and third years living on campus, for all the benefits it brings to the social dynamic of the college system. Early signs show it’s working – but it will take more than some pretty flyers and smart PR to hit their predictions.”



One comment

Anon

22 Jan '13 at 2:46 pm

In 2007 the bottom rung of accommodation was £60, the top was £80. In 2009 the bottom was £80 and the top was £100. And now in 2013 the bottom is £100 and the top is £125. How the university can justify these increases is beyond me – £5k/year in rent would get you a fantastic house in any part of York you wanted. Add in three other people, and at £20k/year you’ve basically got free reign.

If I was paying £100 for Derwent or old Vanbrugh, I’d be wanting a lot more than they’re getting now!

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