

NUS launches Valour House, its first sports-themed student hostel

Residence is open to athletes and those keen on sports and an active lifestyle

Shermaine Ang

In one of National University of Singapore's newest on-campus hostels, residents can "study" how to play a new sport in an elective course.

About 600 undergraduates moved into Valour House on the Kent Ridge campus in August 2025.

Located next to the university's sports centre, Valour House, which is NUS' first sports-themed student residence, offers access to a wide range of sporting facilities.

The hostel also features sports performance facilities and a recovery lounge to help athletes recover more quickly after intense training.

Residents can take an elective course, Sports for Life, offered in collaboration with the Department of Physiology at Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine. They will also get opportunities to organise sports events for the wider NUS community.

Speaking to the media at the launch of Valour House on March 25, house master Ivan Low said residents are chosen based on sporting involvement, community involvement and good character.

"You need to contribute positively to the community as well... We want students who are in (Valour House) to be able to lead the athletes and be athletes of good characters," added Dr Low. He is also a senior lecturer and education director in the Department of Physiology at Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine.

Up to 50 per cent of Valour House rooms are available for athletes and individuals who show sporting excellence, and the rest for other students.

NUS' dean of students Ho Han Kiat said: "We don't see this as a hothouse for athletes - that

means not everyone is here to be developed as a national or world-class athlete."

Instead, Associate Professor Ho noted, Valour House hopes to create a community of athletes as well as non-athletes who are keen to participate in sports and keep an active lifestyle.

Speaking at the hostel's launch, Acting Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and Senior Minister of State for Education David Neo said Valour House is a space for both high-performance athletes and sports enthusiasts to build a "like-minded and high-spirited" community.

Inaugural sports carnival NUS Athlora was held alongside the launch. Jointly organised by the NUS Students' Sports Club and Valour House, the aim is for the event to be an annual affair which fosters active lifestyles and connects students through sports.

Professor Aaron Thean, NUS' provost and deputy president of academic affairs, said: "With more than 1,300 student athletes training and competing, representing NUS or Singapore, a sports-themed residential environment is both a natural and meaningful extension of student life on our campus."

"It also reflects our commitment to better support our national athletes while positioning NUS as a university of choice for outstanding student athletes."

He added that beyond competition, sports is an educational tool that builds resilience, teamwork and "a mindset geared towards lifelong growth".

NUS said on March 25 that Valour House brings the total number of its on-campus hostel places to about 12,500.

This supports its aspiration to provide every undergraduate the opportunity to experience on-campus living for at least one year, particularly during their freshman year, it added.



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NUS Muay Thai students at Athlora, an inaugural sports carnival held at the launch of Valour House. Residents of the hostel can take an elective course, Sports for Life, where they can take part in sports and earn credits.

Valour House also offers residents more than 30 student-led sports, arts, social and wellness interest groups. In addition, every resident belongs to a cluster supported by a dedicated residential life team. The five clusters participate in the yearly cluster games and monthly events such as birthday celebrations and festive-themed gatherings.

Valour House resident Pearlyn Koh, 24, is a fourth-year business administration undergraduate who is a former national table tennis player and now competes for the varsity team.

The gym, multi-purpose sports hall and table tennis training hall are less than five minutes' walk from where she stays.

Ms Koh, who lives in the Hume area, said: "In the past, I would train until night. Then, by the time I reach home, it would be very late and the next morning I would have to go to class. So that was a bit more tiring."

"But now, it's much more convenient. I can even train a bit longer because I know that it's just five minutes away from where I stay."

She also teaches table tennis basics to newcomers in Valour House's interest group in the sport.

Ms Koh, who also teaches table tennis basics to Bukit Gombak residents, hopes to make the sport more accessible for people in NUS and Singapore.

For first-year business analytics student Ang Jia Jun, 21, staying in Valour House allows him to play sports he has never tried before, like volleyball, tchoukball, squash and dodgeball.

Mr Ang, who was a dragon boat athlete in junior college, said: "In university, I didn't choose to continue dragon-boating because I feel like it would take up too much of my time and I couldn't pursue other things, like my hall life or my social life."

He is also taking the Sports for Life course, where he opted to try another new sport: canoe polo.

The aspiring business analyst enjoyed a lecture on how to stay fit after leaving university. "I think (these) are all very important skills and things that we need, because as we grow older, the opportunities to play sports or keep active become fewer and fewer."

"For me, sports is an outlet where I can de-stress and make friends. I definitely will be playing sports until I'm old because it's a way for me to continue having that connection with my friends."

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